**Wednesday, December 14, 2011**

*If you know someone who would like to be on this listserv, please send their email address to* [*Michael.Yarbrough@dpi.nc.gov*](mailto:Michael.Yarbrough@dpi.nc.gov)*.*

***\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE:*** *Each entry in this Weekly Update features the* ***email address*** *of at least one* ***contact*** *person or department.  For questions, concerns or technical assistance, please email the appropriate contact(s) directly. Thanks!*

***Archived Race to the Top Weekly Updates*** *are available here:* [*http://www.ncpublicschools.org/rttt/updates/*](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/rttt/updates/)

**NEW THIS WEEK**

         ***Elimination of the Grade 10 Writing Assessment for 2011–12***

         ***Next Generation of Assessments: What Will the Assessments Be Like in 2012-13?***

         ***Recommended High School Sequencing Site***

         ***NC Education Service Maintenance***

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT…**

         ***February/March READY Meetings for NC Principals and Teacher Reps***

         ***New Teacher Effectiveness and Support Video***

         ***Upcoming IIS Webinars***

**NEW THIS WEEK**

***Elimination of the Grade 10 Writing Assessment for 2011–12***

NCDPI has received notification of approval from the United States Department of Education (USED) to eliminate the Grade 10 writing test for the 2011–12 school year. The continued use of the North Carolina End-of-Course Test of English I in 2011–12 is sufficient to meet the ESEA assessment requirements for high school reading/language arts. Please see the attached memo from the USED for additional information.

Please also note that the ***NCEXTEND1*** Writing Assessment is also eliminated for 2011–12.

***Next Generation of Assessments: What Will the Assessments Be Like in 2012-13?***

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year the new Common Core State and NC Essential Standards will be taught and assessed in NC public schools. Schools are currently participating in the stand-alone field tests for the new assessments in ELA, Math, and Science, and the tests will be operational next school year, 2012-13. Test specifications are available on the website to describe the information that will be included in the new assessments (by content area and grade level). You can find the new assessments specifications on the website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/assessment/online/>.

Additional information available on the online assessment website includes a quick reference document about the Next Generation of Assessments. This document describes the benefits of our new assessments and the timeline for administration, references the alignment with the SMARTER Balanced Assessments, and provides additional resources for more information about our plans for the transition to these new assessments. You can find the quick reference document at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/acre/assessment/assess1pageroct11.pdf>.

**MORE INFO:** Kayla Siler, [Kayla.Siler@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Kayla.Siler@dpi.nc.gov)

***Recommended High School Sequencing Site***

The State Board of Education’s mission states, “Every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century.”  To successfully guide students through secondary courses, NCDPI has created a high school course sequencing site, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/hs-sequencing/>.  This site identifies a series of recommended courses within a content area that bridges secondary and college educational segments, thus allowing a smooth progression of study without repetition of coursework.  Additional sequencing documents will be posted as they are completed.

**MORE INFO:** Maria Pitre-Martin, [Maria.PitreMartin@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Maria.PitreMartin@dpi.nc.gov), or Tracey [Greggs, Tracey.Greggs@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Greggs,%20Tracey.Greggs@dpi.nc.gov)

***Online NC Education Service Maintenance***  
  
The online educator’s resource NC Education will go offline this Saturday, December 17 between 8 am and 1 pm due to a planned maintenance event.  During the maintenance period, professional development modules (e.g., NC FALCON, Call for Change), online assessment, and other learning resources (e.g., The Writing Instruction System) located on NC Education will not be available.  All service will resume on Saturday at 1 pm.    Please have your staff plan accordingly.  
  
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**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT…**

***February/March READY Meetings for NC Principals and Teachers***

Superintendent June Atkinson along with members of NCDPI will host regional READY meetings in all eight education regions of North Carolina between Feb. 28 and March 23, 2012. The purpose of these meetings is to provide each principal and a teacher representative from each school with tools for communicating anddescribing the new Essential Standards and Common Core state standards, the new state accountability model (piloted in 2012-13) and other changes in North Carolina's public schools.

The focus of the 3-hour meetings will be on how all of these changes fit together to support learning for students and tools for communicating with their respective school communities.

Each principal is being asked to bring one teacher representative from his or her school to these meetings. It is important to note that these meetings are targeted toward principals and teacher representatives to provide them with the tools they need for their specific roles in their schools as they prepare for the Common Core and other changes coming next fall.  Local communications directors and public information officers also are being invited to these meetings. Other stakeholders are receiving information and preparation through various avenues of communication and professional development opportunities.

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***New Teacher Effectiveness and Support Video***

Ensuring that North Carolina's teachers are READY for the new Common Core and Essential Standards includes taking a "deeper dive" into what they teach, how they teach and how it is reflected in student growth. The new teacher evaluation gives teachers more meaningful insight into their work. Listen to North Carolina teachers describe how this is happening in their own words, along with principals who also find the new evaluation more helpful, in this new video from NCDPI.  Visit [www.ncpublicschools.org](http://www.ncpublicschools.org), click on the Career and College: Ready, Set, Go! logo to the left, then the Teacher Effectiveness and Support link at the bottom.

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***Upcoming IIS Webinars***

NCDPI is partnering with the North Carolina Association of Educators to present webinars around how the new Instructional Improvement System (IIS) will help teachers assess their students and target curricular resources to meet individual students’ needs.

One opportunity is next week (December 13) and the other is February 21.  A flyer with detailed information, including how to access the webinars, is attached.

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